

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4, 6-9 and 13-19 are pending in the present application. Claims 5 and 10-12 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and Claims 1-4, 6-9 and 13-19 have been amended by the present amendment.

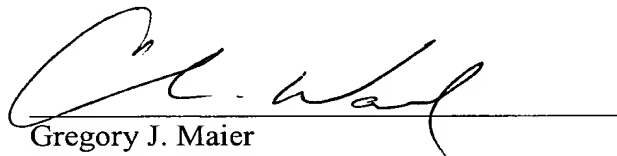
In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-11 and 13-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over GB 2,102,661 (herein "GB '661") in view of Gerein (U.S. Patent 5,855,245); and Claim 12 was indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the indication that Claim 12 includes allowable subject matter. In light of that indication, Claim 1 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of Claim 12 and intervening Claims 5 and 10, and Claims 5, 10 and 12 have been canceled. Further, Claims 1-4, 6-9 and 13-19 have been amended to better reflect U.S. claim drafting practice.

Consequently, in light of the prior indication of allowable subject matter and the above discussion, and in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Maier', is written over a horizontal line.

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